तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Highlights

• **Humility, Real and Pretentious**
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

• **Who Understands Bhagavatam?**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

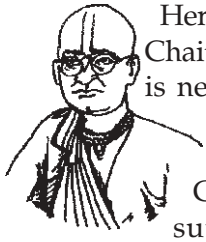
• **Krishna or Maya Kirtana?**
Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• **Chastised for Being Inattentive**
From the life of Srila Rasikananda Prabhu

• **Worship Krishna's Holy Names**
Dvija Haridas

Humility, Real and Pretentious

Prabhupada Srila
Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur



Here are the words spoken by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu himself: "It is necessary to be humbler than a blade of grass if one is really anxious to take the name of Godhead." One never supplicates [prays to] another unless one realizes his own littleness. When we pray for the help of other persons we consider ourselves helpless. Sri Gaurasundar has told us to call upon the name of Godhead, which means that he has told us to accept the help of Godhead. He has also told us to be humbler than a blade of grass when we call upon the name of Godhead. If we call upon Godhead for converting him into our servant or if we want to take his help for doing any work on our own account we cannot preserve the quality of humility greater than that of the blade of grass. External exhibition of humility is not that quality of lowliness which makes one humbler than the blade of grass. Mere show of humility is nothing but insincerity or hypocrisy. That manner of calling that is responded to by one's subordinate does not reach Godhead, because he is the supreme independent, perfect, self-conscious entity who is subject to none. It is necessary to fully establish oneself in the state of guileless humility. If this is not done one's prayer does not reach the perfect autocrat. Prayer to Godhead is impossible if one is absorbed with the attempt to merely destroy one's self-conceit.

There is another condition. While it is necessary to call upon Godhead by being humbler than a blade of grass, it is also necessary at the same time to be possessed of the quality of patience. If we are not patient we cannot call upon Godhead in the manner that will reach him. We become impatient whenever we covet anything. Covetousness is the opposite of humility. We must fully believe in Godhead. We must believe in his plenitude. We can have no wants if we call upon him. If we have this perfect faith we cannot be lacking in patience. On the other hand, if we are covetous, if we are betrayed into inconstancy [fickleness] by our impatience, if we secretly cherish any plan of gaining our object by means of any ability or merit of our own, then we are no longer in the condition to call upon Godhead.

— Page 259-260. *Sri Chaitanya's Teachings*. Edited by Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami. Sree Gaudiya Math. Madras. 1989.

next column ☞

Who Understands Bhagavatam?

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Devotional service includes nine processes, beginning with hearing, chanting and remembering the activities of Lord Vishnu. Only one who has taken to devotional service can understand *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, which is the spotless *Purāṇa* for a transcendentalist (*paramahaṁsa*). So-called commentaries are useless for this purpose. All Vedic literatures maintain that *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* has to be learned from the person *bhāgavata*, and to understand it one has to engage in pure devotional service. So-called erudite scholars or grammarians cannot understand it. Only one who has developed pure Krishna consciousness and has served the pure devotee, the spiritual master, can understand *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

— Purport to *Cc. madhya* 24.313.

Krishna or Maya Kirtana?

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Some people say, "*nānā muni nānā mata*" or "*jata mata tata patha*" — there are many *munis*, many philosophies, and many paths. But this is not true. It is only cheating. Only the descending path is the perfect path. We are conditioned souls. We cannot understand *tattva*, spiritual truth, by dint of our material knowledge. We cannot relate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead or his energy. Puffed up by material mundane knowledge, conditioned souls speculate and give their own theories. Sometimes one becomes puffed up by being a great renunciate, *tyāgī*, like Gandhi, who also gave his own theory. Sometimes learned scholars interpret the Vedas in their own way by their mundane scholarship. This is all cheating.

In the material world, every person has their own opinion, and all opinions differ from one another. So there are thousands and thousands of opinions. If we accept such opinions then we'll be cheated. But if the original cause of this creation manifests himself out of his causeless mercy and showers his causeless mercy on us, then we can understand *tattva*. Otherwise we will be cheated. Therefore *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.23) says:

> *nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo*
> *na medhayā na bahudhā śrutena*
> *yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas*
> *tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*

You cannot understand this *paramātmā-tattva* — the truth relating to the Supreme Lord or Supersoul — by dint of your own intelligence, by dint of your mundane scholarship or knowledge, or by hearing many *pravacanas* — speeches from *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, yogis, and speculators.

The Supersoul is a form of the Lord. He is known as the *caitya-guru*, the guru residing in the heart of every living entity. When he showers his mercy on an aspiring devotee who is very eager to understand the truth, he assumes a form — the form of Sri Guru — and speaks spiritual truth through him.

Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came and gave a very easy process to know *tattva*. Unless the heart of the conditioned soul is purified, cleansed of material dirt, one cannot understand spiritual truth. Therefore he gave *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, chanting of the holy name of Krishna. But this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* should actually be *kīrtana* of the pure name of the Krishna. We should not consider the *kīrtana* of *māyā* as *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. This *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is all auspicious in the world, and Gaurasundar, Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, has taught us this thing by giving the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

The conditioned soul has four defects — *bhrama* (the tendency to commit mistakes), *pramāda* (the tendency to be illusioned), *vipralipsā* (the tendency to cheat), and *karaṇāpāṭava* (imperfect senses). Because of these defects, a conditioned soul must be bewildered. Such a conditioned soul thinks that the two letters *kṛṣ – ṇa*, are material, and that the name of Krishna is simply a word in the dictionary. Their perception is not *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. If someone thinks like this, then he will be cheated of this great philosophy. The name of Krishna and the alphabets that make up his name are non-different from Krishna. They are all transcendental. Therefore Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada Maharaja says if real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is present then the whole atmosphere will be purified and the hearts of the living entities will be purified [See Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's articles in *Bindus* 8 and 83]. *Krishna-kīrtana* is not *kīrtana* done for the purpose of obtaining material enjoyment. In villages sometimes there is an epidemic of cholera, so people do *kīrtana* to drive out the disease. This is not *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*.

If there is real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, then even the impersonalists, *māyāvādīs*, will be purified.

Their defective intelligence will go away. By such *kīrtana,* those who are atheists will become devotees and be easily liberated. When Mahaprabhu manifested his pastimes, there were so many *māyāvādīs* like Prakasananda Saraswati and his thousands of followers in Kasi. They all became devotees by the *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* of Sriman Mahaprabhu. By Mahaprabhu's *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* many materially attached people, *viṣayī-loka*, also got perfection. The example is King Prataparudra. Real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* also gives liberation to trees, stones, beasts, animals, birds, and all living beings. The example is when Mahaprabhu went through the Jharikhanda jungle. The trees, creepers, beasts, birds, deer, tigers, and lions all chanted *hare kṛṣṇa* and got liberation.

But nowadays we find that real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is rarely being done. Therefore people are suffering and they cannot get liberation. Sriman Mahaprabhu is the most munificent incarnation. He came here for the welfare of every living entity, even the animate and inanimate. He performed this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* for all. Therefore one who is intelligent, a really learned and wise person, should accept this teaching given by Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and accept a bona fide spiritual master who comes in this *brahma-madhva-gauḍīya-sampradāya*, the succession coming from Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. They will get mercy. And by doing this real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* such a person can deliver the whole world. Otherwise there will be no deliverance at all.

This is Kali-yuga, the most degraded age. Sinful activities are rampant. However, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came, and *kali-kukkura-kadana* — crushed the dog of Kali-yuga [Bhaktivinode Thakur's, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru,* song 3.4.1]. Mahaprabhu gave four regulative principles: no meat eating, no intoxication, no illicit-sex life, and no gambling. These are the four pillars of sinful activity. If someone strictly observes these four regulative principles, accepts a bona fide spiritual master coming in the disciplic succession of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and chants *hare kṛṣṇa,* he'll be in Satya-yuga, not Kali-yuga. So where is the question of sin? But those who don't do it, they are in Kali-yuga. Kali is there.

Devotee: You said that if someone is chanting the holy name but they have some ulterior motive, that's not the real name. What, then, is the position of devotees like myself who are chanting *hare kṛṣṇa* and trying to become purified, but other desires are there. For example, a *gṛhastha* wants a house, or a *brahmacārī* wants a stereo tape recorder.

Gour Govinda Swami: You should accept all these things for the service of Krishna, not for your own sense gratification. Otherwise there will be no *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, it will be *māyā's kīrtana*.

Devotee: So when we're chanting *hare kṛṣṇa*, even if desires are there, if we. . .

Gour Govinda Swami: Just redirect those desires for serving Krishna, then it's all right.

Devotee: Then our *kīrtana* can actually purify others as well as ourselves?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, yes. Definitely!

— Morning lecture in Bhubaneswar on 15 September 1989.

Chastised for Being Inattentive

From the Life of Srila Rasikananda Prabhu

Rasikananda Prabhu was the foremost disciple of Srila Syamananda Prabhu, who in turn was one of the leading students of Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhupada.

One day, Rasikananda Prabhu was sitting along with his brothers discussing *Bhāgavata* in the court of the king of Rajagara known as Vaidyanatha Bhanja. The manager of the king's estates came and stood before the king. When Ramakrishna, a disciple of Rasika and a staunch devotee, saw the attention of the king wander from the *Bhāgavata,* he said, "Oh king, you are an ignorant fellow. You will give up hearing the nectarean topics of Lord Krishna just to hear from your manager?" Saying this, he slapped the face of the king and the king immediately fainted. Everyone in the assembly was very sorry to see this and the king's ministers were about to kill Ramakrishna for his impudence. However, anticipating the situation, the king quickly recovered and fell at the feet of Ramakrishna. With folded hands he announced to everyone, "I have committed a sin and for that I was punished. Rasik Prabhu is discussing the topics of Lord Krishna, but I allowed my attention to wander elsewhere. It is the verdict of all scriptures that topics other than those concerning Lord Krishna are like poison. That person who allows his attention to wander away from the topics of Krishna is a great sinner and is like dog or a pig which likes to eat rotten things. My brother Ramakrishna has rightly served me. He has saved me and shown proof of his affection

for me." The king then took hold of the neck of Ramakrishna, and, to the astonishment of everyone, he began to weep. The king then took the hand of Ramakrishna and said, "Your hand must be pained after slapping my hard body." Ramakrishna then had the king sit by his side and they continued to hear about Lord Krishna. ❀

— Page 90-91, *The Story of Rasikananda*, by Sri Gopijanavallabha Das. Published by Bhakti Vikasa Swami. Mumbai. 1997.

Worship Krishna's Holy Names

Dvija Haridas

There are several followers of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who were known as Dvija Haridas. In "A History of Brajabuli Literature", *the scholar Sukumar Sen expresses his opinion that the poet Dvija Haridas was born in Kanchana Nagar in Bengal, but in his old age he lived in Vrindavan. The poet Dvija Haridas' songs are still popular, and to this day are sung daily in the homes of devout* vaiṣṇavas *of Bengal.*

(Dhānaśī-rāga)

govinda jaya jaya gopāla gadādhara
kṛṣṇacandra kara kṛpā karuṇā-sāgara

All glories, all glories to you, Lord Govinda, who protect the cows and hold a mace! O moonlike Krishnachandra! O ocean of mercy! Please be merciful to me.

jaya guru govinda gopeśa giridhārī
śrī-rādhikāra prāṇa-dhana mukunda murāri

Glories to you, the spiritual master of all! O Govinda! O Lord of the cowherd boys! O lifter of Govardhana Hill! O treasure of Radhika's life! O giver of liberation! O enemy of the demon Mura!

hari-nāma vine re govinda nāma vine
biphale manuṣya janma yāra dine dine

If one does not chant Lord Hari's holy names or Lord Govinda's holy names, day after day one passes this human birth without any good result.

dina yāya bṛthā kāje rātri yāya nide
nā bhajilāma rādhā-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāravinde

My days and nights I passed in fruitless labor. I did not worship Sri Sri Radha and Krishna's lotus feet.

kṛṣṇa bhajivāra tare saṁsāre āinu
michā māyāra baddha haiyā vṛkṣa samāna hainu

I came to this material world to worship Krishna. I was bound by the illusions of *māyā* and I became dull like a tree.

kāla-kali pāpa-prapañca prāktana-vaśe
nāhi maje hāya jīva kṛṣṇa-nāma rase

Alas! By the influence of my past sinful activities and the age of Kali I did not immerse myself in the sweet mellow of Krishna's names.

kṛṣṇa-nāma bhaja jīva āra saba miche
palāite patha nāi yama āche piche

Just worship Lord Krishna's holy names, O *jīva*! All else is illusion! There is no alternative, as Yamaraj is following you!

kṛṣṇa-nāma hari-nāma baḍa-i madhura
yei jana kṛṣṇa bhaje se baḍa catura

Kṛṣṇa-nāma and *hari-nāma* are very sweet. Those who worship Krishna are very intelligent.

ye nāma śravaṇe haya pāpa vimocana
dvija hari-dāsa kahe nāma-saṅkīrtana

By hearing this name one becomes free from sin. The *brāhmaṇa* Haridas thus performs *saṅkīrtana* of the holy name. ❀

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